

WHAT A MONTGOMERY WARD & CO EMPLOYEE DOES WITH HER EIGHT DOLLARS A WEEK

*Jane Whitaker Says the Millionaire Shylock Employers
Will Have Their "Pound of Flesh."*

By Jane Whitaker.

I talked with a girl employed by Montgomery Ward last night to see if she spent her \$8.00 as per the schedules furnished the Vice Committee by Mr. Thorne.

This is not a girl I picked at random—she is a girl I have seen night after night as she came home from work, and always noticed the same thing—red, swollen eyes, and such a pitiful tiredness.

"I pay \$2.00 a week for my room," she said, and that is the lowest price a girl can pay and live in a neighborhood that is respectable. My breakfast is always the same—coffee and rolls—and it costs ten cents each morning. I spend from 15 to 17 cents for my lunch."

"Do you eat at Montgomery Ward's?" I asked. "I understood Mr. Thorne to state that they gave you your food there at half price."

"That is not true," she answered. "They charge as much, and perhaps a little more than they do on Madison street. They give you a spoon-

ful of potatoes for 5 cents, roast beef costs 10 cents, but I try to save on my lunches so that I may spend twenty-five cents each night for my dinner. I get a real nice dinner for that in the home of a woman in that neighborhood, who does home cooking."

"And what do you think you spend a week for laundry?"

"I don't want to make the price seem too high to you, but the cheapest I can get that work done for is 75 cents a dozen, and the wash-woman will not do less than a dozen pieces, so I usually have the even dozen."

"So that, including 60 cents a week carfare, you spend \$6.85 a week living?"

"Yes, I do, but all of the girls do not live as NICELY as I do. The girls who live at home are really often worse off than the girl who can spend her entire money on herself. Most of those girls have to contribute to the support of their families and they eat less at lunch—sometimes just taking a cup of coffee, often not eating at all."

"You have left \$1.15 for clothing

and shoes—can you tell me how you dress on that?"

"I don't," she replied, tersely; "my father has sent me \$55.00 since I have been in Chicago, and I have spent that and all I had over for clothes. I don't look like a fashion plate, at that, do I? I don't think my clothes are any more expensive than the department store girl must wear to look neat, but there is an advantage the other girls feel in working for Montgomery Ward. It doesn't matter how shabbily you dress—you can wear cheap clothes, old clothes, linen skirts, anything, and no question is raised."

"Mr. Thorne stated on the witness stand that if a girl looked poorly clad, they investigated the case."

"I have never heard of such a thing—if they did so, they would have to investigate almost every girl in the place, since that is why girls stay at M. W.—because it would cost them more to dress if they worked anywhere else."

"Have you a benefit society?"

"We have, and so far I have refused